

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9405

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PFOR AV

SUBJ: ANGUILLAN LEADER RONALD WEBSTER CALLS ON AMBASSADOR

REF: TELECON BETWEEN MACKLIN, ARA-LA/CAR, AND AMBASSADOR, AUG 11

1. LEADER OF THE ANGUILLAN COUNCIL RONALD WEBSTER CALLED ON AMB AFTERNOON OF AUG 11 AT HIS INITIATIVE. DCM ALSO PARTICIPATED IN ENSUING CONVERSATION.

2. WEBSTER STATED HE VERY GRATEFUL TO US FOR JOBS PROVIDED ANGUILLANS IN USVI, WITHOUT WHICH HE DOUBTED HIS ISLAND COULD HAVE KEPT AFLOAT. NOTING CONCERN OVER LIKELIHOOD THAT, IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, BONDED WORKERS- AS DISTINCT FROM WORKERS HOLDING PERMANENT RESIDENT VISAS-WHO WITH THEIR FAMILIES CONSTITUTED MAJORITY OF 2500 ANGUILLANS IN USVI, WOULD BE FORCED TO GO HOME, HE SAID HE HAD BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND BY USVI AUTHORITIES THAT, ONCE ANGUILLA GOT ITS NEW CONSTITUTION, ANGUILLANS WOULD BE TREATED FOR IMMIGRATION PURPOSES AS NATIVES OF BVI TREATED. DCM POINTED OUT THAT USVI AUTHORITIES DID NOT DETERMINE US IMMIGRATION POLICY AND THAT EMBASSY HAD NO INFORMATION CONFIRMING HIS UNDERSTANDING RE TREATMENT OF ANGUILLANS ONCE CONSTITUTION WENT INTO EFFECT.

3. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS POSED BY AMB AND DCM, WEBSTER DISCUSSED AT LENGTH PROPOSED CONSTITUTION FOR ANGUILLA, RELATIONS BETWEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BRITISH CMMMISSIONER AND ANGUILLAN COUNCIL, AND GENERAL

POLITICAL/ECONOMIC SITUATION IN ANGUILLA. EMB WILL SUBMIT REPORT BY AIRGRAM ON THIS PART OF DISCUSSION.

4. WEBSTER RAISED QUESTION OF DOG ISLAND, BUT AMB PARRIED QUERY REMARKING THAT EMB HAD NOT BEEN FULLY INFORMED OF DEFENSE AND NAVY PLANS AND WEBSTER LET THE MATTER DROP.

5. COMMENT: THIS WAS FIRST CONTACT BETWEEN WEBSTER AND EMB IN MORE THAN A YEAR. (AS DEPT AWARE, EMB HAS ESCHEWED HAVING ANY OFFICER VISIT ANGUILLA IN ORDER OBVIATE POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES WITH GOV). WEBSTER EVIDENTLY WELL DISPOSED TOWARD EMB AND US AND REGARDS US AS FRIENDS. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT HE HOPES FOR FROM DOG ISLAND PROJECT; HOWEVER, GIVEN RECENT AGREEMENT BY HMG TO GRANT ANGUILLA A CONSTITUTION OF ITS OWN, HE IS IN OPTIMISTIC MOOD AND FULL OF PLANS FOR FUTURE, AND WE SUSPECT THAT IN THESE PLANS PROJECT HAS A PLACE OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE.
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